

Connecting kids, first-responders and... Super Heros

August 21, 2019



For 6-month old Nox Toler and his 2-year-old brother, Theo, of Crescent City, it was an up-close and personal visit with first-responders and superheroes ... with no emergencies to deal with.

Sam and his wife, Jaclyn Toler, brought their children to the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Curry County Heroes Breakfast on Aug. 17, at the Brookings Elks Lodge. Outside, Brookings fire trucks, Cal-Ore Light Flight ambulances and Curry County sheriff's vehicles were on display in a fun setting.

As Jaclyn Toler held Nox, Curry County Sheriff's Deputy Jeremy Krohn carefully pinned a junior deputy sheriff's badge to the front of the boy's red shirt.

Cal-Ore Life Flight paramedic Art Tarin said the first-time Heroes Breakfast is a positive connection for first-responders and small children. "In an emergency, it can be chaotic and confusing, and they may be scared," he said. "We want to show that we are not somebody they need to be afraid of.

"We want them to run to us and know that we are here to support them. So it's good catching them at this age."

Brookings Police School Resource Officer Rob Johnson spent plenty of time at the breakfast greeting the children. "This is important," he said, "because it helps us make connections with children as being people, as being human.

"Being in a setting where it is not an emergency, they are not being traumatized. We get to meet with them and see them one-on-one on their level and spend a little time with them."

Johnson said the experience builds positive relations between police and children. "If they already have that connection and experience in a good setting, then we're not somebody in a scary uniform.

"So in a scary time, we are someone they can turn to and who they can trust," Johnson said.

John Richards and his wife, Madeline, of Brookings were among those who brought their two small children, 2-year-old Wyatt and 5-year-old Talin, to the Heroes Breakfast. "I think this is awesome, because Talin loves superheroes and Wyatt loves fire trucks," John said.

"This helps teach them to recognize who the first-responders are and that they are there to help them," Madeline Richards said.

CASA director Mona Chandler said the nonprofit organization advocates for children in foster care and that the Heroes Breakfast is designed in large part to create awareness of the work performed by CASA.

"I thought it was a good time to do the event because the kids are getting ready for back to school, they are excited, and I wanted it to be a kickoff to the new school season," she said.

"It is also to show the very specialized work that we do for children. Being that voice for kids and being the looking glass for the court judge is so huge."

The Heroes Breakfast featured pancakes, bacon, eggs and fresh fruit. Partnering organizations included Brookings Police and Fire, the Curry County Sheriff's Office, Cal-Ore Life Flight ... and a variety of superheroes, including Batman, Superman, Captain America and Wonder Woman. Curry County sheriff's deputies were in the superheroes customs for the event.

Chandler said she hopes to continue the event annually.

For more information about CASA of Curry County, call 541-813-2272.